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ABSTRACT

Asian students are the most successful racial group in American schools, and this success has led to the model minority stereotype. However, the question of Asian students and school segregation is seldom examined, largely because of the traditional academic success of Asian students. This study compares the level of racial segregation Asian students face in comparison with other minority groups. Major Asian ethnic groups in the past experienced severe discrimination in areas in which they were concentrated, but the present situation is very much in flux. Aggregate statistics do not capture the emergence of significant trends of low-income Asian students having severe trouble in school, especially recent immigrants from Southeast Asia and the Pacific Islands. Some recent refugee and immigrant groups are clustered in areas where concentrations of low-income Asians have produced schools with severe educational and social problems. Data from the Common Core of Data for the 1991-1992 school year and other sources show that nearly 61% of the nation's Asian students attend school in just four states, California, New York, Hawaii, and Texas. The differences between issues facing other minorities and those facing Asian students combined with the diversity of the Asian populations means that any simplistic effort to extend desegregation policies designed for African Americans in the South to Asians in multiethnic cities will not be successful. Results of various studies show that there are some Asian communities that now have serious segregation. It would not be correct, however, to treat all Asians as disadvantaged minorities. The best procedure for designing approaches to desegregation will be to analyze each of the Asian subgroups separately. It will also be important to separate the short-term needs of new immigrants from the long-term necessities of those who have been in the United States a while. (Contains 3 figures, 13 tables, and 15 reference.) (SLD)

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ASIAN STUDENTS AND MULTIETHNIC DESEGREGATION

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Asian students are the most successful racial group in American schools in spite of the fact that the great majority of the nation's Asian population are immigrants or children of immigrants who have come since 1965, when the new Immigration Act ended generations of racial restrictions. No one who examines enrollment trends at elite colleges, sees photos of the winners of the Westinghouse Science contest or valedictorians of metropolitan high schools could fail to be impressed by the remarkable achievements of many Asian students. Although Asian American groups often correctly point out exceptions to the "model minority" stereotype which tends to ignore some Asian and Pacific Island groups that have had great difficulty in adapting to U.S. schools, the overall pattern is one of very high educational attainment. Many commentators in and outside the Asian communities attribute the educational success to cultural values emphasizing educational achievement as the child's primary responsibility. This assumption has even led some to admonish other less successful immigrant groups and of American minority groups to adopt these cultural norms and values. Two issues, however, are often missing from this discussion. The first is that, apart from refugees, immigration law favors highly educated Asian immigrants. This means that we are often comparing the better educated, s uccessful Asian immigrants to low income and poorly educated minorities or immigrants from other areas. Another key issue that is seldom examined is the question of whether Asians are in an educational settings that are similar or different from other minorities. This study examines one key aspect of that question by comparing the level of racial segregation Asians face compared to other minority groups.

The very rapid growth of Asian populations makes it urgent to begin to understand and develop policy for Asian Pacific students and the schools they attend. Asian students will grow from what was a tiny fraction of the students outside Hawaii in 1970 to an enrollment far larger than that of African American students today by the middle of the next century. Between 1980 and 1990 the percentage of school age children of Asian Pacific background doubled from 1.6% of the national school age population to 3.3 in a single decade. *(Statistical Abstract, 1992*: 17). Asian students are the most rapidly growing group of American students and the nation's Asian population, according to the Census Bureau, will soar to 40 million people by 2050 if the existing trends continue. What happens to Asian students may now seem an interesting side issue but it will become a question of fundamental importance for the future of our schools

Although there has been limited research and policy attention to Asians, there has been great fascination with the academic performance of Asian students, particularly at a time of intense worry about economic competition with Asian nations. Theories are often put forward about the cultural norms that lead to hard work,, values, family structure and other purported causes of better education. The assumption has often been that Asians, confronting the same challenges and opportunities, were doing much better than other minority groups. This report examines whether or not the opportunities for contact with successful students and schools are equal for the various minority groups. It reports that, in general, Asians are far less likely than African Americans and Latinos to confront segregation either by race of poverty. Since racial and economic segregation are very strongly related to lower levels of school academic achievement, this means that most Asian students attend more competitive schools.

The analysis also shows, however, that segregation patterns are developing for Asians in a number of central city school districts which are receiving recent immigrants. There is some sobering news in this analysis. Asian segregation is relatively high and growing in areas and there are a significant number of Asians in high poverty schools, many more proportionately than whites. If part of the story of the success of Asian students is that they have been in better, more competitive schools than other minorities, more segregated Asian groups could suffer from problems like those confronting most Latino and African

American students.

Asian Groups and Social Status in American Society

In a society with a history of severe discrimination against Asians, particularly in those areas of the western U.S. where Asian immigration has concentrated, the evidence of Asian success in recent times seems very positive. National attitude surveys show positive changes in public views of some groups which once faced intense discrimination. The General Social Survey of NORC, perhaps the most important academic survey asking basic questions about the society over a very long period, has tracked the public's view of the social standing of various ethnic groups for many years. Comparing rankings from 1989 with those from 1964 the data shows that the two Asian groups included in the surveys, Japanese and Chinese, both had sharply improved social standing in the eyes of the American public and they rank above several major groups in the white population. Japanese-Americans, for example rank above Jews, above "foreigners" in general, above Finns and Greeks and Spanish-Americans. Chinese were ranked lower than Japanese, but above Eastern Europeans and Russians as well as African Americans and various Latino groups.(Lewin, 1992: A12). Although the ratings show that African Americans and Latinos have lower social standing than virtually all of the white groups, the disparities are much less clear between whites and some Asian groups who were previously the object of severe discrimination. This rising status, however, does not necessarily , however, apply to other Asian groups, such as refugees from Vietnam or Cambodia. Unquestionably, the major Asian groups present in the U.S. in the past experienced discrimination that was severe in areas where they were most highly concentrated. Their present situation, however, is very much in flux.

Education is, of course, one central key to social and economic status in contemporary U.S. society. The battle over equal access to strong education for minority students has been such a serious and persistent struggle because of the powerful impact of education. In the late twentieth century, the U.S. has become a society in which completing high school is essential for a decent job and those without higher education have experienced a declining standard of living for a generation. Asians as a group are doing better than whites

and fare better than other minorities on both fronts. In 1990, according to the federal government's National Education Longitudinal Study, only 3% of Asians had dropped out by tenth grade, compared to 5% of whites, 9% of Latinos and 10% of African Americans.(National Center for Education Statistics, 1992: 4). Asians are at much less risk than any other group of dropping out. The decisive differences, however, are more apparent in higher education. Since the late 1970s, those without some higher education have seen significant declines in income. Even though a large part of the Asian population are recent immigrants, Asian Pacific enrollment in college has soared in the 15 years from 1976 to 1991 from 1.8% of the national total to 4.6% in 1991, far more than the Asian Pacific share of the public school population-- 3.3%.(National Center for Education Statistics, 1994: 21) In some graduate fields, particularly in engineering, science, and math, the disproportions are much higher. Since education is expected to become even more powerfully related to economic success in the future, the success of Asians is a powerful sign of future upward mobility.

A simple summary of Asian educational success, however, masks important variations within the Asian Pacific communities. Aggregate statistics do not capture the emergence of significant groups of low income Asian students having severe trouble in school, especially among recent immigrants from Southeast Asia and the Pacific Islands. (Ong and associates, 1993). Some recent refugee and immigrant groups ares clustered in some parts of districts where concentrations of low income Asian students have produced schools with severe social and educational programs.

Poor and poorly educated refugees who came in large numbers after the end of the Vietnam War have encountered serious problems. The first refugees from Indochina to the U.S. had very high educational credentials. The 1980 Census reported that Vietnamese then in the U.S. had the same average level of education as whites.(First and Carrera 1988: 7). Those who left right at the end of the war and were working with the American forces and establishment in Vietnam tended to be highly educated. Later, however, much less educated refugees followed in large numbers. The least educated were destined to become a much more substantial presence in the U.S. because of the extremely large family sizes often found among uneducated low income rural residents coming from traditional societies. A late 1980s

estimate compared the fertility rates of various groups of Southeast Asian refugees with the Mexican American rate, which was, itself, significantly above the U.S. norm. The average Hmong family was 11.9 children, the typical Cambodian family was 7.4, the Laotian family could expect 4.6 children, the Vietnamese, 3.4, and the Mexican American 2.9.(Ibid.: 6). By contemporary U.S. standards, and by the standards of other groups of Asians in the U.S., these family sizes were extraordinary. The problems of these families were frequently compounded by their total unfamiliarity with western languages and the extreme differences between English and their native languages. The settlement of some in concentrated communities where learning English could be avoided and where welfare dependency became the norm, compounded the problems. Some of these groups faced problems in the cities much more like those of rural Mexicans or American Indians than like those of the more elite Asian immigrants.

The emergence of concentrated groups of poorly performing Asian students created new forms of desegregation disputes in some unlikely places. In two Wisconsin districts, for example, this trend led to controversial plans to integrate the children in troubled high poverty schools, many of whom were Asian refugees, into middle class schools. Community resistance over such a plan led to a recall of most of the members of the Wassau, Wisconsin school board in 1993. Although Wassau was the most overwhelmingly white metropolitan area in the U.S. in 1980 and retained the distinction in 1990 with a 98.5% white metropolitan population, several of the city's schools were deeply affected. The immigration of a significant population of disadvantaged Asian refugees with different cultures and serious social and educational problems produced a serious racial reaction to a proposal for school integration . (Beck, 1994: 86, Census Bureau statistics in *Cleveland Plain Dealer,* Jan. 13, 1994: 5A).

The past successes of Asian students and the development only very recently of substantial Asian populations in many areas probably explain the lack of serious attention to most civil rights issues for Asian students. The great growth of Asian students took place long after the civil rights movement, during a period when the issues of equity in education had been largely replaced by an emphasis on competitiveness. With the exception of controversial 1974 Lau v. Nichols decision that afforded educational programs for non-

English speaking students, the only large nationally visible civil rights battle on Asian education was one agai t policies and procedures Asian leaders saw as intended to limit the proportion of Asian students admitted to some of the nation's most elite universities.(Takagi, 1992).

Many school desegregation plans ignored Asian students, simply desegregating African Americans or African Americans and Latinos with the district's other students, who would often include a small number of Asians. (San Francisco, where there largest single group of students is Chinese, is a notable exception, with desegregation requirements for each of the city's major Asian groups). As Asian numbers grow rapidly in many multiracial communities it is essential to determine how segregated Asian students are, to find out whether their schools are unequal, and to study how best to treat Asian students in desegregation plans and to find out whether or not segregation is increasing for Asian young people.

Asian Attitudes Toward Desegregation

There is extremely little information on the attitudes of Asian students and parents towards desegregation of schools. The great majority of national surveys have too small a sample of Asians to permit any valid generalization about Asian attitudes. (Often, in fact, the national surveys do not present data even for the much larger Hispanic population.) As the country grows continually more diverse, it will be very important to augment survey samples to provide an understanding of the attitudes of each major group of Americans.

A 1994 survey of general attitudes, not focused specifically on schooling, found that 85% of Asian Americans, compared to 72% of Latinos , 71% of African Americans and 66% of whites favored the goal of "full integration," but the meaning of this goal was not clearly spelled out in the question.(Holmes, 1994: B8). It was interesting, however, that Asians, who are often described as having very little interest in desegregation goals, were the most supportive of the groups questioned.

In San Francisco, the most heavily Asian city district in the continental U.S. affected by a desegregation order, Asian groups have expressed both support and opposition to various aspects of the desegregation plan. One Chinese group filed a lawsuit against the

limits on Chinese enrollment in one popular and successful academic high school in San Francisco. This was nationally reported and pointed to as evidence of serious Chinese disenchantment with desegregation. The entire debate, however, concerned only one school in the district and many Chinese students were applying for other academic schools created under the desegregation plan. Other Chinese parents had earlier, in fact, sued to become part of the process of implementing the plan, stating their agreement with the goals of the desegregation plan. The federal district court responded to the lawsuit by appointing a appointing an expert in Asian education to the Consent Decree Advisory Committee which oversees the order.

A Louis Harris national survey of racial attitudes released in 1989, had an Asian sub-sample. The data showed that 48% of Asians believed that poor and minority children were not receiving adequate education. Of Asians with children, 19.5% said that their children had been bussed for desegregation. Seventy percent of those parents whose children were bussed said that the experience had been"very satisfactory" and another 29% said that it had been "fairly satisfactory." Only one in fifty saw the experience as unsatisfactory. In terms of supporting busing for "racial balance", 53% of the Asian population favored the policy, 38% were opposed and 10% expressed no opinion. (Louis Harris and Associates, 1989: appendix, Study No. 883006A). If these surveys are accurate portrayals of Asian opinion, the Asian experience with desegregation through busing has been an overwhelmingly positive one and the goal of integrated schooling is very widely accepted.

Distribution and Segregation of Asian Students

We have prepared a special analysis of the patterns of segregation of Asian students by race and poverty across the U.S. This report uses the Common Core of Data from the U.S. Department of Education's National Center for Education Statistics for the 1991-92 school year. There were 1.4 million Asian students counted in the states reporting data. States not reporting school enrollment data have only a small share of the nation's Asian population, according to the Census and include only two large states, Virginia and Georgia.

California is by far the most important location for Asian students, enrolling 553,000 pupils, or 39% of the national Asian student total of 1.4 million. In California, the rapidly

growing Asian population already accounts for about a tenth of the total state enrollment, significantly exceeding the state's African American enrollment. If the Asian student proportion continues to grow at its existing rate and to be so disproportionately concentrated in California, education in the Golden State will be powerfully influenced by these changes. Continuation of recent population trends in California will produce a huge state with a population the size of a major European country in which the largest group of students is Latino, followed by whites, followed by Asians, followed by African Americans and then Native Americans. California will experience a level of multiracial diversity with few parallels in a major world region.

The great importance of California to Asian students is apparent in Table 1, which shows that no other state has even a third as many Asian students and only three has as much as a tenth as many.

Table 1

States with Largest Asian Enrollments, 1991-1992

California	552,934
New York	155,265
Hawaii	118,571
Texas	71,883
New Jersey	51,739
Illinois	51,560
Washington	50,506
Florida	30,568

The growth of Asian enrollment, of course, reflects the extremely rapid growth in the number of Asian and Pacific residents in the U.S. population. Table 2 shows that the total national population increased by 108% during the 1980s. Some communities increased even faster during a decade when the nation's non-Latino white population was growing very slowly. The most rapidly growing major Asian subgroup was Vietnamese. The extremely rapid growth of people from India drew little attention but their numbers could surpass

American Indians in two decades if the growth rate of the 1980s continues.

Table 2

U. S. Asian and Pacific Island Population, 1980- 1990 (000s)

	1980	1990	% Growth
U.S. Total	3,500	7,274	108
Chinese	806	1,645	104
Filipino	775	1,407	82
Japanese	701	848	21
India	362	816	126
Korean	355	799	125
Vietnamese	262	615	135
Hawaiian	167	211	27
Somoan	42	63	50
Guamanian	32	49	53
Other	NA	822	NA

Source: *Statistical Abstract of the United States, 1992: 17.*

Even more dramatic, in terms of the rates of change, are the figures on the tidal wave of Southeast Asian immigrants after the conclusion of the Vietnam War. In the 1960s, only seven Southeast Asian refugees were admitted. The number soared to 150,000 in the 1970s as the war ended. The huge immigrant of "boat people" fleeing the region brought the number of immigrants to 324,000 in the 1980s. As time passed, the educational credentials and the social status of the immigrants declined, particularly during the great exodus of war refugees, many of whom were uneducated rural residents.

Table 3

Major Asian Refugee Admissions, 1960-1990

Country	1961-1970	1971-1980	1981-1990
Cambodia	0	7,739	114,064
Laos	0	21,690	142,964
Vietnam	7	150,266	324,453
Remainder of Asia	19,888	60,417	387,639
Asia Total	19,895	210,683	712,092

Source: *Statistical Abstract of the United States, 1992*: 12.

Even the most basic demographic information reveals several important trends. There is extreme diversity among Asians. Some of the most rapidly growing groups had never previously had significant U.S. populations. The refugee changes in the 1980s brought into the country some groups with the extreme cultural and linguistic differences and lack of preparation for settlement in American cities. Even these basic statistics make it very apparent that the terms "Asian" or "Asian Pacific" define extremely broad categories, spanning populations with fundamentally different social and educational backgrounds.

Location

Of the nation's Asian students, 61% attend schools in just four states--California, Hawaii, New York, and Texas. Nearly three-fourths (74%) are concentrated in schools in eight states (Table 1). Since the Asian immigration and population growth are not yet powerful in much of the East, Midwest, and South, there is a serious risk that policy makers and analysts will ignore these students. Even where there is a very large immigrant community, as in California, the changes may be overlooked because of the vast and more explosive immigration of millions of poorly educated people from Mexico, the Caribbean and Central America. Most states have less than 10,000 Asian students and some have only a

few hundred. As time passes, however, and successive generations of Asians immigrate to the U.S., are educated, and find work in the national labor markets, student enrollments will surely increase in many regions and school districts which now have no significant Asian enrollment.

The striking differences between issues facing other minorities and most Asian students combined with the tremendous diversity within the Asian community mean that any simplistic effort to extend desegregation policies designed for African Americans in the South to Asians in multi-ethnic cities would produce odd, even perverse results. It is important to understand the situation confronting each Asian subgroup in order to craft an effective multiethnic school desegregation policy. This is an important issue in a fair number of large school systems now. It will emerge in many others within a decade.

National and Regional Segregation Levels.

The typical Asian student is in a school that is 48% white. Asian students are in contact with many more white students, on average, than are African American and Latino students, whose schools averaged 69% minority for Latinos and 66% minority for African Americans. In the continental U.S., segregation for Asians is highest in the West, followed by the South. Asians in the Northeast are in majority white schools in striking contrast to African American and Latino students who are highly segregated. In the Midwest and in the Border states Asians attend schools with large white majorities, again in striking contrast to the experience of African American students in both regions.

On a national level, the statistics showed that 50.0 percent of Asian students were in majority white schools, 39.7 percent in schools that had from 50-90% minority students, and 10.7% in schools with 90-100% nonwhite students. The average U.S. white student is in a school with 2.6% Asian students. In the West, however, the number doubles to 5.5%. In Hawaii, it is 56.8% and in California, it is 9.1%. Most states are below 2%. In most of the country, the rapidly growing national presence of Asians is still almost invisible to white families.

Segregation of Asians from whites has risen sharply in the last decade in the West. In that region, the typical Asian student in 1991 was in a school with 57% nonwhite students.

On the other hand, Asians in the Northeast region's schools were in schools with an average of 55% whites and the average was 73% white for Asian students in the Midwest.

A substantial part of the segregation was accounted for by Hawaii, which had 119,000 Asian students, about a twelfth of the national total. Since Hawaii's schools have a large statewide majority of Asian students, it is impossible for most students to be in majority white schools. Hawaii is fundamentally different from other states; it has a small white minority and a large statewide majority of Asian students. Since Asian families occupy the highest status in Hawaii, it might be more accurate to talk about the problems of segregation of the minority groups in Hawaii from the dominant majority. In any case, in Hawaii only 3% of Asian students attend predominantly white schools, 79.4% attend schools that are 50-90% nonwhite and 17.7% attend 90-100% nonwhite schools. Thinking about the Hawaii case makes it apparent why the old definitions of segregation need to be reviewed in describing the situation of Asian students. Desegregation policy is aimed at solving the problem of isolation of racial and ethnic minorities from the opportunities in the schools of the more affluent, powerful, and educationally successful groups. In settings where those groups are Asian, segregation of Asian students in a heavily Asian school hardly qualifies as a problem of educational inequality.

Toward a New Concept of Segregation

It is very difficult, as the Hawaii example shows, to talk about segregation of Asian students without thinking about how to define segregation. Our earlier reports, for example, have measured the degree to which each racial minority group was integrated with whites. In earlier periods when the overall school population was overwhelmingly white and minority students were overwhelmingly concentrated in low performing schools, this offered a reasonable estimate of the segregation problem. For Asians, however, it turns out that in the continental U.S. they rarely face isolation in a school dominated by their own ethnic group, unlike African Americans and Latinos. They have little contact in schools with African American students and the largest minority group they confront in their schools is other Asians. Since Asians have higher educational attainment levels than whites this form of "segregation" often brings disproportionate exposure of Asian students to high achieving

students and schools not inferior education. Contact with a substantial group of other Asian students, usually in an integrated setting with substantial numbers of whites, might usually be seen as an advantage, as integration, not segregation.

If segregation were defined as concentrations of disadvantaged minorities (groups with average education and income well below the national averages), then the meaning of the enrollment patterns of the Asian students would be very different. Asian students are in schools with little more than a fourth students from disadvantaged minorities (African Americans, Latinos, and Native Americans). In most of the country, they are in schools with large majorities of students from the two most advantaged groups--Asians and whites. Later in this report we show that different racial groups experience very different levels of economic segregation.

A more traditional approach is to define segregation and integration exclusively in relationship to white students. This was a logical approach when the country was basically a nine-tenths white society with only small groups of non-black minorities. At that time a school with a large white majority reflected the mainstream of the society. Today, however, that is not the situation in contemporary California and a number of other parts of the country. A school that reflected California's youth now would have no majority group, would have large groups of Whites and Latinos and smaller but substantial groups of Asians and African Americans. Defining desegregation in San Francisco, for example, by contact with the small minority of whites in the school district would ignore the kind of city that San Francisco has become and the strong academic performance of major groups of Asian students. Statistics prepared for an analysis of San Francisco's desegregation plan showed, for example, that Chinese, Koreans and Whites were well above the district average in each subject tested and always far above African American and Latino students.(Orfield, Cohen, Foster, Green, Lawrence, Tatel, and Tempe, 1992: 29). In a multiracial society segregation and integration have to be thought about in a multiracial rather than a black-white perspective.

Multiethnic Schools

Asian students are, on average, in the most multiracial schools of any group in the country. Asian students in some parts of the country, schools that may foretell the kind of society that is taking shape in the U.S. and offer an opportunity to learn about the best ways to handle the multiracial education that more and more Americans are likely to attend.

Asian students attend school with fewer than the national average percent of African Americans but substantially more than the average proportion of Latinos. Asian students, on average, are in schools with 10.7% black students and 16.9% Latino students. On average their schools have about a fourth Asian students.

Overall in the U.S., Asian students are in schools with an average enrollment of 47.5% whites, 20.9% Asians, 16.9% Hispanics, and 10.7% African Americans. Asians experience more than twice as much contact with whites as with other minorities.

Hispanics experience the greatest average contact with Asians. There are 4.8% Asian students in the school attended by the typical Hispanic. In contrast, white students are in schools with an average Asian enrollment of 2.6% and African Americans in schools with an average of 2.2% Asians.

So far the largest impact of the Asian growth is on the Pacific coastal region. Californians are on the cutting edge of the emergence of this multiracial education. Since a clear majority of all U.S. Latino students are in California and Texas, two of the four states with the most Asian students, there is abundant opportunity for contact between these two very rapidly growing nonwhite populations. Virtually no research or policy attention has been given to this kind of school integration.

Viewed on a national scale, Asians could much more appropriately be classified as an advantaged rather than a disadvantaged group of students and one that is far less segregated than African Americans and Latinos. Since, on average, Asian students score higher and come from families with higher average income than whites, and a great deal higher than other minority groups, both white and Asian students can be accurately described as coming form predominantly privileged groups (even though there are large numbers of both Asians and whites living in poverty and experiencing educational failure). Asian students, on average, attend a school that is 68.4% white and Asian, counting the two

groups with the highest levels of educational achievement and economic success.

In almost all states with a substantial Asian population the residential and economic dispersion of the various Asian subgroups puts Asians in contact with each of the other major racial and ethnic groups residing there. The high income and residential integration, and the high intermarriage rate for some subgroups, means Asians have far more contact with whites than African Americans and Latinos. In contrast, Hispanic students typically have 36% combined white and Asian fellow students and African Americans have 37%. This creates a very large difference. Asians are in schools, on average, with two-thirds students from the groups with most success in U.S. education but Latinos and blacks, on average, attend schools with less than half this proportion of whites and Asians. To the extent that the background of other students in the school and school's level of academic competition contributes to student achievement, Asian students typically face a far more favorable school setting than other minority groups.

On a national level, to use another measure, 50% of Asians attend schools where the majority of the students are nonwhite. In contrast, 66% of African Americans and 73% of Latinos attend such schools. Only 8.5% of whites attend such schools. (see Chart 1) Outside of Hawaii and the West, Asian students tend to be in schools with large majorities of white students. In the South, 68% of Asian students were in majority white schools; in the Northeast, the most segregated region for African Americans, 58% of Asians were in majority white schools, and in the Midwest, 82% of Asians were in mostly white schools.

Table 4

Proportion of Asian Students, Compared to Hispanics, Blacks and Indians in Majority White Schools, 1991-92

Region	Asians	African-Amer.	Latinos	Indians
South	68.2	39.2	23.9	52.6
Border	75.0	40.7	62.6	78.8
Northeast	57.9	23.8	22.0	69.3
Midwest	81.6	30.1	46.6	72.3
West	40.4	30.3	26.8	46.7
Hawaii &Alaska	6.1	NA	27.0	37.3

Table 5

Percentage of Students Attending Schools with 50-100% Minorities by Race

	% in 50-100% Minority Schools
Asian	50.4%
Hispanic	73.1%
Native American	42.5%
Black	65.9%
White	8.5%

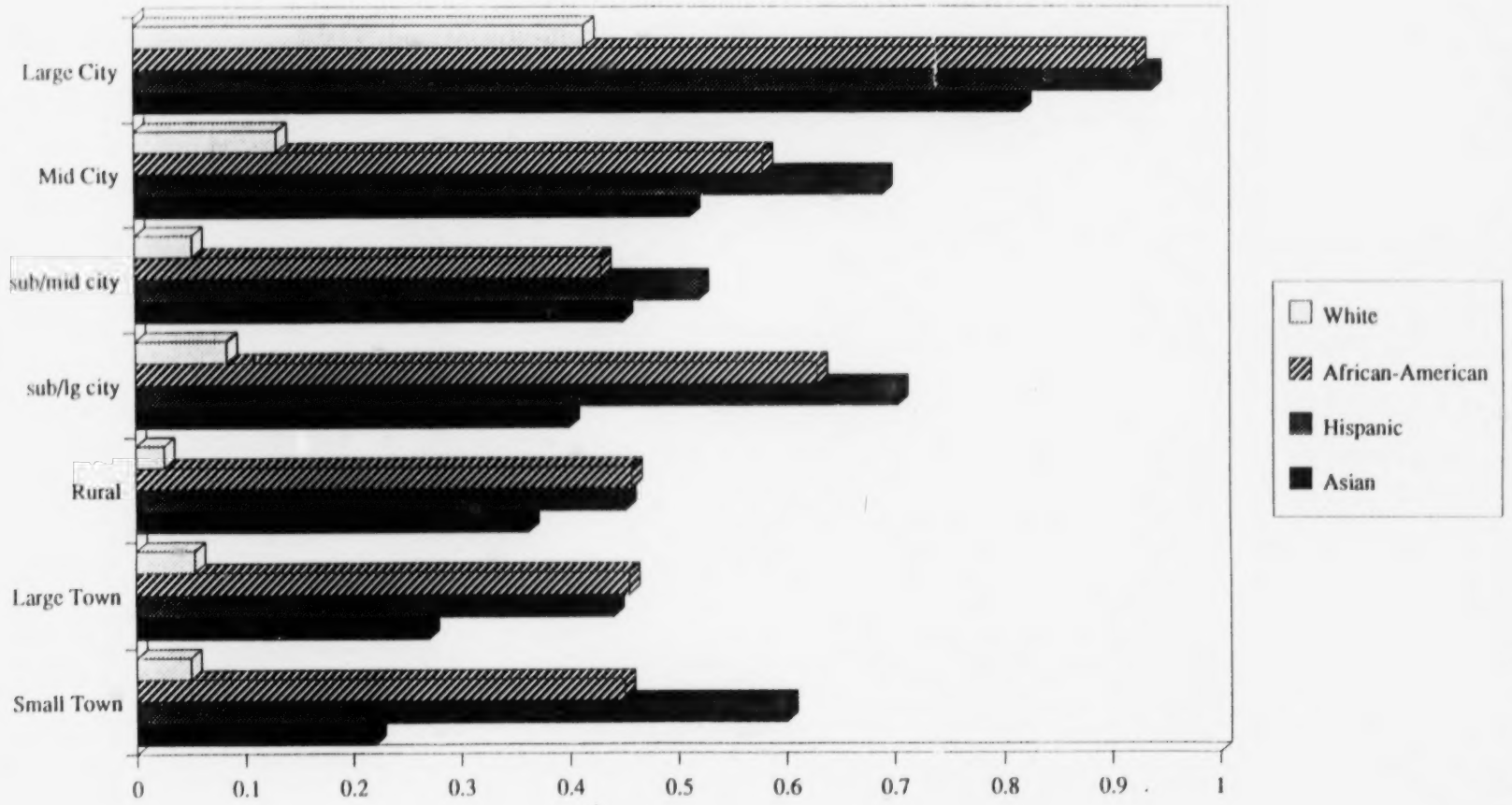
Table 6

Percentage of Students Attending Schools with 50-100% Minorities by Race and Region

Region	Asian	Hispanic	African-Amer	White
South	31.8%	76.1%	60.8%	13.1%
Border	25.0%	37.4%	59.3%	4.0%
Northeast	42.1%	78.0%	76.2%	5.7%
Midwest	18.4%	53.4%	70.0%	3.8%
West	60.0%	73.2%	70.0%	15.0%
Alaska/Hawaii	94.0%	73.0%	40.0%	30.0%

Whites are least exposed to predominantly minority schools in the section of the country that goes from Maryland to Maine through the Midwest. In this vast area only about one white child in twenty attends school with a majority of nonwhite students (table 6). This is an area with old central city school districts long ago cut off by independent suburbs and with high levels of metropolitan housing segregation. Asian students are most exposed to predominantly minority schools in the areas where their share of the population is greatest, Alaska and Hawaii, and the West. In the Midwest, they attend the most heavily white schools.

Percentage of Students Attending Schools with 50-100% Minority Populations by Race and Location



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The patterns of segregation vary greatly in communities of differing sizes. The large central cities have extreme patterns of minority concentrations and it is only in such urban districts that Asians experience severe segregation in majority nonwhite schools. (table 7). Among whites, only those who live in big central cities have a significant chance of attending a majority nonwhite school. 42% of whites in large central cities are in predominantly nonwhite schools, five times the national proportion, but a very small fraction of whites attend big city schools. Asians in the suburbs of big central cities experience much less segregation than African Americans or Latinos. Asians are also more likely to live in the suburbs.

Table 7

Percentage of Students Attending Schools with 50-100% Minority Students by Race and Community Size

Community	Asian	Hispanic	African-Amer	White
Large City	81.7%	93.8%	92.4%	41.5%
Mid-City	51.2%	69.0%	58.0%	13.1%
Subs-Lg.City	40.0%	70.4%	63.0%	8.4%
Subs-Med.City	45.0%	52.0%	43.0%	5.3%
Large Town	27.0%	44.0%	45.5%	5.4%
Small Town	22.0%	60.0%	45.0%	5.0%
Rural	36.2%	45.2%	45.8%	2.6%

Asian students are seriously segregated in only a handful of states, but those states are home to a significant portion of the total Asian school enrollment. California shows a serious isolation for all minority groups but a pattern quite unlike the rest of the continental U.S. for a large Asian population table 8). The level of isolation for Asian students in the nation's largest state grew rapidly since the early 1980s.(Orfield and Monfort, 1992: 33). Since California is by far the most important destination for Asian students, these trends demand close scrutiny. This trend is partially a reflection of the growth of concentrated poverty among recent Asian refugees in some cities.(Ong and associates, 1993)

Table 8

Percentage of Students Attending Schools with 50-100% Minorities by Race in California

State	Asian	Hispanic	African-Amer.	White
California	68.4%	79.8%	80.0%	27.0%

Four states with patterns of significant isolation provide schools for 56% of the Asian students in U.S. public schools.(table 9). The vast majority of Asian students in other states are in schools with overwhelming majorities of white students. In many of the other states, the contrast with the African American and Latino experiences are extreme. The numbers look quite different, however, if we consider both whites and Asians as primarily educationally advantaged groups. If we look at the combined exposure of Asians and Latinos to African Americans, Latinos, and Native Americans, Asian segregation would look much less severe.

Table 9

Most Isolated States for Asian Students

State	#Asians	%In Majority Non-White Schools	%In 90-100% Non-White Schools
Hawaii	118,571	97.0%	17.7%
California	552,934	68.4%	16.0%
New York	115,265	61.3%	20.2%
Louisiana	9,276	55.3%	20.9%

As the Asian-American population grows and diversifies, it may well face increasing segregation within the public schools. Large concentration of students in high poverty areas create many forms of stress on schools and fail to provide the contact and examples of middle class students and families that can have a powerful impact on students. Since 1980

there are more poor Asian students (although the average income remains high), some of the newer and less affluent groups still live in concentrated immigrant communities, and their leading destination, California, is one of the first states in the U.S.with a predominantly non-white student body statewide. These trends make it reasonable to expect some increase in Asian segregation by both race and poverty. After all, the conditions that those new communities faced were much more similar to those facing African American and Latino immigrants to the cities. When California entered its first severe recession in generations in the early 1990s, the job losses and welfare cuts meant that the social and economic problems in newer Asian communities were intensified.

Asians and Concentrated Poverty Schools

A basic fact of African American and Latino segregation in U.S. public schools is that it is that segregation by race usually equals segregation by poverty. These schools face the double problems of negative racial stereotypes and tremendous burdens on children and communities associated with poverty. An earlier report showed that schools that are 90-100% African American and/or Latino, for example, are more than 14 times more likely than white schools to have a majority of low income students. Many of the educational inequalities connected with racial segregation are no doubt the consequences of the enormous social and economic differences--which themselves are deeply shaped by earlier discrimination against the students' parents.

Unlike the African American and Latino experiences, in general, concentrations of Asian students are not strongly related to increased concentrations of poverty. There is a very strong relationship between the percent of African American or Latino students in a school and the percent of poor students. The correlation coefficient for all U.S. schools is .45 for blacks and .43 for Hispanics. Native American enrollment percentage is also related to increasing poverty of students, but much more weakly, .11. For whites there is a very strong negative relationship, since the percent of poor children falls dramatically as the percent of whites rises. The correlation coefficient for the nation's schools is -.61. Asians as a group occupy an intermediate position, with no significant relationship between the

proportion Asian in a school and the percent poor. (-.01 correlation). Heavily Asian schools are, in other words, no more likely to have concentrations of poverty than those with smaller shares of Asians.

This does not mean, however, that there are no poor Asian schools with typical inner city poverty problems. The lack of an overall relationship may be the net result of a negative relationship between poverty for more successful groups within the Asian community and a significant correlation between racial and economic segregation for the less successful groups.

Across the U.S., 47% of Latinos and 37% of African Americans, but only 10% of whites attend schools where more than half the students live in poverty. 22% of Asians are in such schools. Thus, Asians are more than twice as likely as whites to be in high poverty schools but less than half as likely as Latinos.(see table 10) If schools were to record various Asian ethnicities, rather than lumping all Asians into a single category, the Asians in high poverty settings would doubtless include a very disproportionate number of Southeast Asian refugees.

In general, Asian students attended schools far less afflicted by concentrated poverty than Latinos and African Americans. In one instance, however, Asian students in Louisiana are as segregated in higher poverty schools at the same high rate as Hispanic and African-American students (table 13).

Percent of Students Attending Schools with 50-100% Poverty by Race, 1991-92

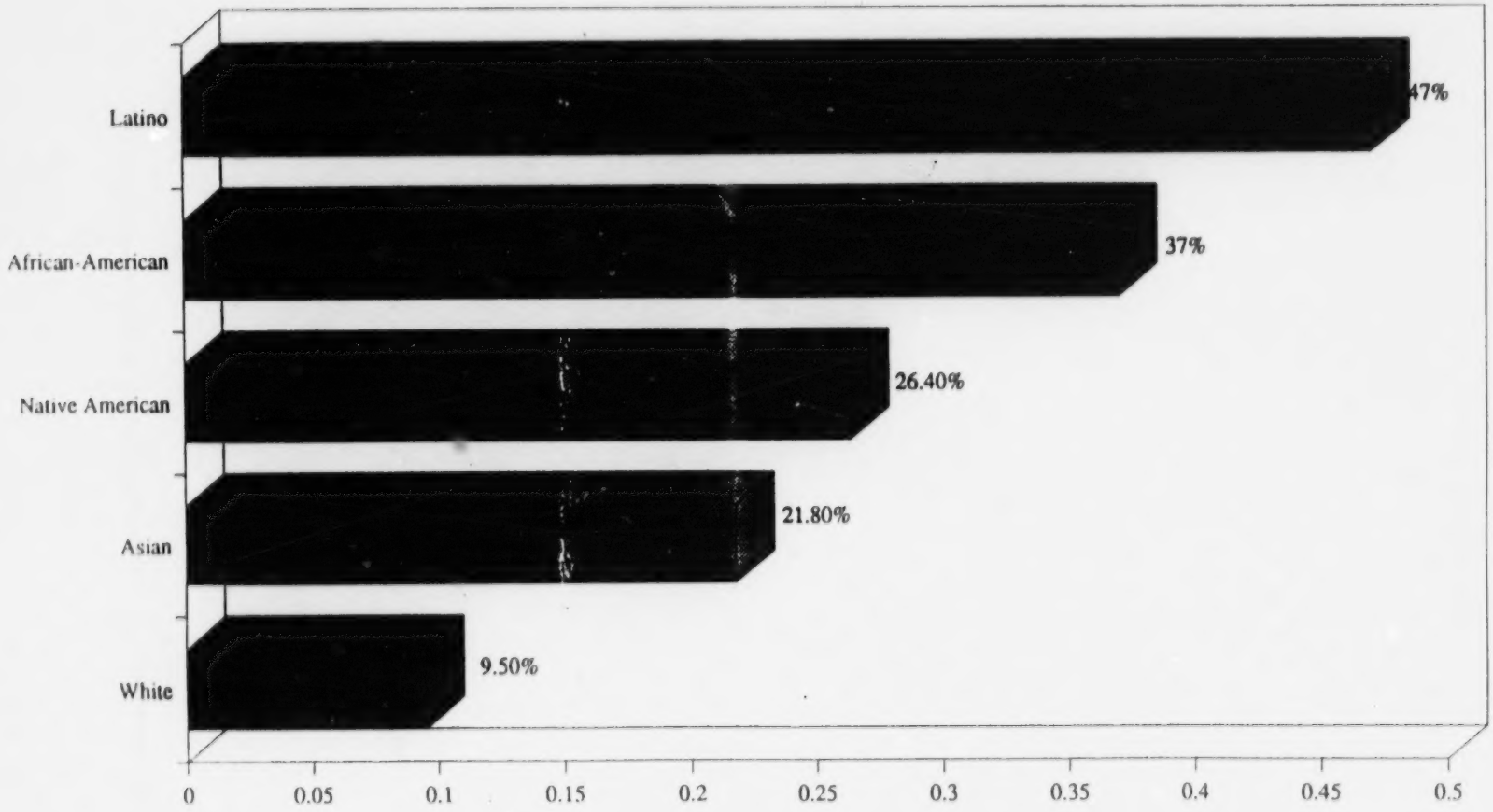

Table10

Percent of Asian and Other Racial Groups in Schools with 50-100% Poor Children

Minority Group	Percent
Asian	21.8%
Native American	26.4%
Hispanic	47.0%
African-American	37.0%
White	9.5%

Regional segregation patterns for the Southern and the West, however, deserve special attention as the two national regions with the highest incidence of Asian, Hispanic and African-American isolation in higher poverty schools. The West has by far the highest percentage of Asian students in high poverty schools, 33.1%. The West's Latino students, however, face much higher levels of concentrated poverty; 51.8% attend schools with 50-100% poverty. 44% of African-American westerners are in high poverty schools. In spite of the wealth of the Western region, there is an extraordinary concentration of minority students there in high poverty schools and Asians are clearly affected.

Although there is a much smaller share of Asian students in the South, 20 percent of Asian students are in schools with a majority of poor students. One reason for more poverty schools in the South is that it is still the nation's poorest region. In the South, nearly two-thirds (62.9%) of Latino students and 45.9% of African-Americans also attend majority low income schools.

Table 11

Percentage of Minority Students Attending Schools with 50-100% Poverty

Region	Asian	Hispanic	African-Amer.
U.S. Total			
South	20.1%	62.9%	45.9%
Border	6.9%	24.3%	30.4%
Northeast	3.5%	15.7%	12.7%
Midwest	12.7%	15.2%	39.2%
West	33.1%	51.8%	44.8%
Alaska/Hawaii	15.2%	14.0%	9.5%

State Differences

At the state level, compared to other minority groups, Asian students have lower proportions attending high poverty schools groups but there is wide variation among the states. For example, Louisiana and California segregate Asian students into higher poverty schools more often than New Jersey and Ohio: In California, 38.6% of the Asian student population are in predominantly low income schools and, in Louisiana, 65.4% of the relatively small number of Asian students are in such schools. Asian isolation in high poverty schools is nearly equal to African-American segregation. Many Asian households are relatively recent immigrants from Southeast Asian. The Asian students there are much more likely to be confronting the characteristic problems of schools with high concentrations of children with multiple needs than those in states like Ohio and New Jersey where only a very small minority of Asian students attend high poverty schools (see table 12)

PERCENTAGE OF STUDENTS ATTENDING SCHOOLS WITH 50 TO 100 PERCENT POVERTY BY RACE AND REGION.

Table 12

Concentration of Asian, Hispanic and African American Students in Predominantly Low Income Schools

State	Asian	Hispanic	African-Amer.
Louisiana	65.4%	61.4%	75.9%
California	38.6%	63.2%	55.0%
Ohio	17.2%	40.3%	58.2%
New Jersey	9.4%	60.1%	52.4%

Community Size and Poverty Concentrations

Asian students are most likely to be in high poverty schools in the largest cities. Poverty concentrations, in contrast, are highest for African Americans in rural areas. Asians outside cities are seldom educated in schools of concentrated poverty. In the largest cities, the degree concentration of Asian students in high poverty schools (33.0%) is not far from the African American rate (40.5%) but both rates lag far behind the Latino rate, 50.5%. The only other type of community to face serious concentrated poverty of Asian students are the middle size central cities. In the suburbs, where a great many Asians live, Asian students have far lower levels of poverty concentration than Blacks and Latinos. In all types of communities, however, Asian students face more contact with poor children than whites students do. Hispanic students experience the highest levels of economic segregation in cities and suburbs of both the largest and the middle size metropolitan areas (table 13).

Percentage of Students Attending Schools with 50-100% Poverty, by Community Size and Race

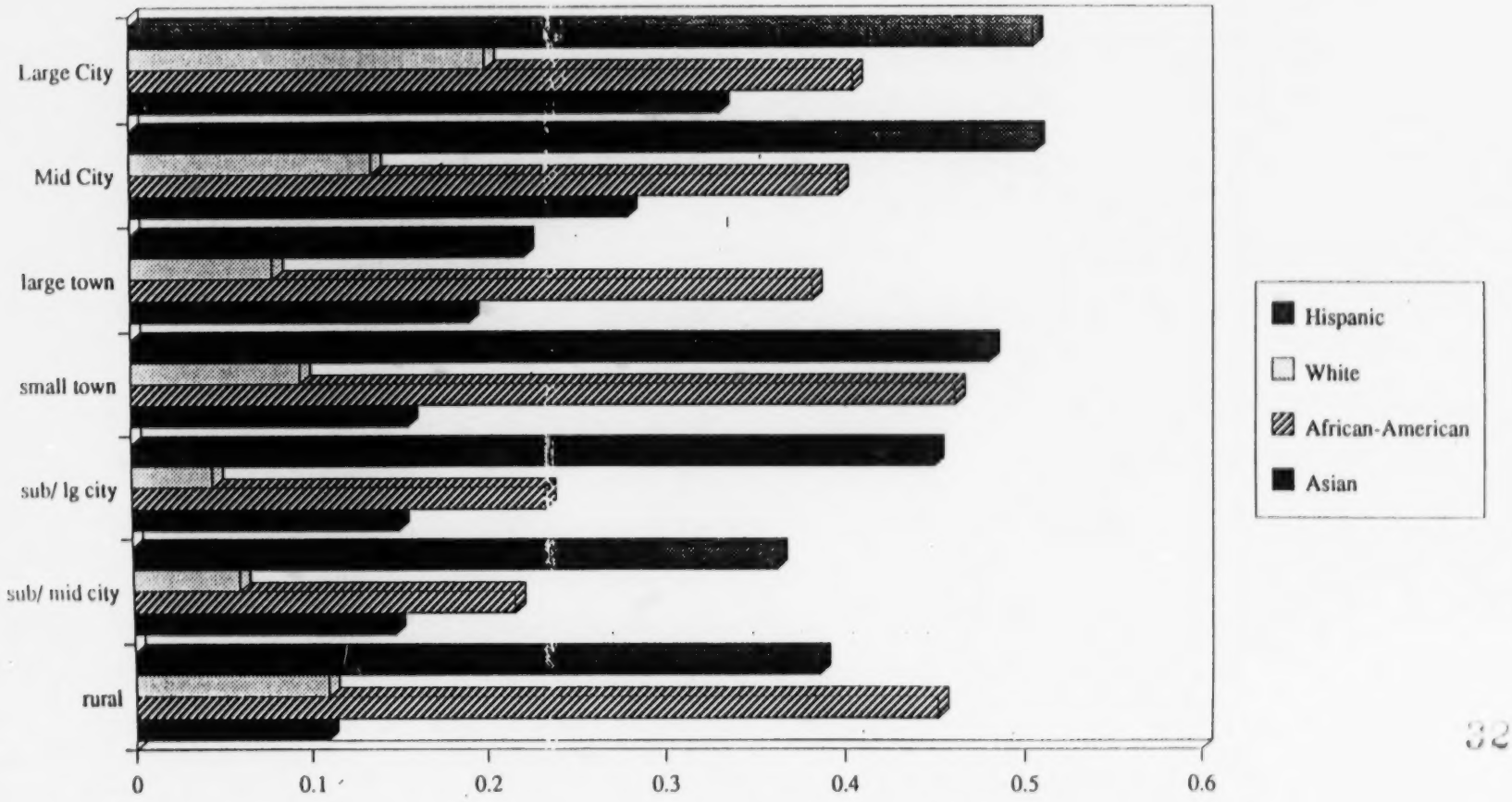

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Table 13

Percentage of Students Attending Schools where 50-100% of Students are Poor by Community Size

Community	Asian	Hispanic	African-Amer.	White
Large City	33.0%	50.5%	40.5%	19.9%
Mid City	27.9%	50.6%	39.7%	13.5%
Sub. of Large City	15.0%	45.0%	23.3%	4.6%
Sub. of Mid City	14.8%	36.2%	21.6%	6.1%
Large Town	19.0%	22.1%	38.2%	8.0%
Small Town	15.5%	48.1%	46.2%	9.5%
Rural	10.9%	38.6%	45.2%	11.0%

Poverty Segregation in Large Districts.

Large districts in some states saw far more isolated poverty for Asian students than in the other states. When we examined districts with more than 15,000 students we found that California, Louisiana, New Jersey and Ohio have greater segregation by poverty patterns and higher poverty levels for Asian students. The big district data may well reflect the situation where there are many newcomers who have not yet made it to the suburbs in regions with very poor central cities. In California there are 78 districts with more than 15,000 students. In two-fifths (44%) of these larger systems most of the Asian students attend predominantly minority schools and in 31% of the large districts, most Asian students study in schools where the majority of the students are poor. About two dozen large districts, in other words, are beginning to show serious patterns of racial and economic isolation. Louisiana has 16 large districts. In 31% of the large districts a majority of the Asian children attends predominantly minority schools and in 44% of the large districts, a majority of the Asian students attend high poverty schools.

Half of the 6 New Jersey large districts have the majority of their Asian students in predominantly minority schools and in 83% of the large districts, most of the Asian student

population attends high poverty schools. In Ohio, in 57% of the large districts, most Asians attend high poverty and majority nonwhite schools. Texas, with 54 large districts also shows serious isolation for Asian students. 35% of the large districts have the majority of the Asian population attending predominantly minority schools and in 20% of the large districts, most Asian students attend high poverty schools Texas has three districts with 100% of the Asian population in high poverty schools.

Metropolitan Differences among Asian Subgroups

When thinking about the different subgroups within the Asian Pacific community, the patterns in one midwestern metropolis seldom thought of as a center of Asian settlement show how the relationship between segregation and poverty may be very different for Asian groups located in the central cities compared to those living in the suburbs. Metropolitan Minneapolis-St. Paul is an informative case study for exploring differences within Asian communities because Minnesota ranked fourth in the U.S. as a destination for Southeast Asian refugees after the Vietnam War, receiving almost 37,000 refugees. (Ong 1994: 119) Asian students make up a significant number of young people in both central cities. Although the metropolitan area population was only 2.8% Asian in 1990 St. Paul had 7.1% Asian residents and Minneapolis had 4.3%. Both had an Asian population far below the national averages for Asian income. Many of the later refugees came to the U.S. with very little education or urban experience and faced grave difficulties in the transition. 25% of Vietnamese in the U.S. and 46% of other Southeast Asians were living in poverty in 1990. In contrast, Japanese, Chinese, Filipinos and Koreans had low poverty rates. (Ibid.: 36, 121-25).

An analysis of settlement patterns for Asians in the Minneapolis-St.Paul metropolitan area showed that 73% of Southeast Asians were concentrated in the central cities, almost a high a fraction as African Americans and higher than that for American Indians or Latinos. On the other hand, people from other parts of Asia, mostly Chinese, Koreans, residents of India, and Filipinos had a large majorities (63.9%) living in the suburbs. Most Asians living in the central cities were poor (46% in Minneapolis and 61% in St. Paul) with poverty rates higher than the African American poverty levels. On the other hand, among suburban

Asians, only 7% were poor, one-fourth of the level of African American suburban residents. The 49% of Southeast Asians-many of them "boat people" from poorly educated tribal backgrounds--were in deep economic and social trouble. The 51% who entered from other countries under normal immigration procedures were an extremely successful population.

It is clear, in a case like this, that the category of "Asian student" is not very informative. Southeast Asian refugees, particularly those who came under special exemptions from immigration laws, after the first wave of middle class and professional Vietnamese, tend to have a fundamentally different situation than Asians entering under normal procedures. Since the Indochinese exodus was a one-time event, the share of Asians in much better circumstances is likely to rise. In the meantime, however, the Asian students in these central cities have problems much like those of the African Americans and American Indians. On the other hand the suburban Asians are an overwhelmingly non-poor and middle class population. Their situation is much more like that of whites. (*Profiles of Change: Communities of Color in the Twin Cities Area,* St. Paul: The Urban Coalition Census Project, August 1993). The extreme differences between the city and suburban Asian populations may mean that the city desegregation plans need to consider Southeast Asians as a group in need of desegregation while suburbs might best see their Asian students as a group that is part of the mainstream population, socially and economically integrated in many communities.

RECOMMENDATIONS

There are some Asian communities now that have serious segregation. There may be more in the future. Some Asian advocates suggest that this means that all Asians should be treated as disadvantaged minorities for civil rights and affirmative action programs This approach, however, would mean giving preferential treatment to many children from very highly educated and affluent families living in white areas who had never experienced segregation. Other Asian groups make no such claim, but ask only that the "model minority" myth not blind policy makers to the reality of much less successful Asian subgroups or local communities who are in need of better opportunities.

This examination of the diversity of schools enrolling Asian students shows that our

research and our policy discussion has lagged very far behind a rapidly changing reality. Asian students can no longer be treated as an asterix in studies of the nation's schools or summarized with a simple generalization about "model minority" status or cultural or mathematical superiority. It is not at all clear that the category "Asian" or "Asian Pacific" makes much sense for reaching conclusions about school policy. In fact, they incorporate groups with fundamentally different histories in the U.S., present location and success in American schools, and social and economic resources in their communities. Since the Asian and Pacific Islands populations are destined to soar in the future and already make up very important elements of our school population in several states and a number of major cities, it is urgent that we collect data and conduct research to find out what is happening and to determine what desegregation methods work best for Asian students. A major effort to explore these issues in California and in a few metropolitan areas with substantial Asian enrollment in other states would greatly advance our knowledge.

In devising desegregation policy, some things are clear and others need systematic research. It is clear that the overall Asian Pacific group differs very significantly from the African American and Latino students normally targeted for desegregation. Overall, the Asian Pacific group is more like the white student population, normally seen as the group with which African American and Latino students are to be integrated. In general, adding white and Asian students and measuring their segregation from African-American, Latino, and Native American students is a good starting point.

Serious segregation by race and poverty for some Asian subgroups, however, requires qualifications to this approach. A minority of the students are in subgroups or local communities whose problems are much like those affecting Latinos or African Americans. Given this situation, there is no clearcut rule to apply to the entire Asian Pacific group. It does not make sense to treat very successful non-segregated groups of students as if they were segregated and disadvantaged. On the other hand, it does not make sense to treat highly disadvantaged subgroups as if they needed no assistance.

The best procedure in designing a desegregation plan may be to analyze separately each of the Asian subgroups and to provide desegregation remedies for those that are segregated and disadvantaged while treating those that are not segregated and are successful

like whites, as part of those with whom the segregated minorities are integrated. In a given community, for example, it could be that the segregated minorities might include African Americans, Latinos, Cambodians, and Samoans. The nonsegregated students might include whites, Koreans, Chinese, and Japanese. In other words, a beneficial plan could be much better constructed by recognition of the diversity of the Asian communities than by trying to treat extremely diverse groups the same because they come under the same statistical category.

Basic research is urgently needed on multiethnic, multilingual desegregation. When the National Institute of Education analyzed research needs in the late 1970s, this need was already apparent. Unfortunately, however, virtually all serious federally-funded research on multiracial schooling stopped in 1981. New research should aim to answer questions related to successful desegregation in situations with three or more major groups. Since most existing research studies black-white relationships in interracial schools, it is urgent to know more about racial attitudes and educational results of multiracial schools and what approaches produce the largest gains in various types of schools.

There were many reasons to think that relationships among minority groups deserve as much attention as white-minority relationships. In many school districts by the early 1990s there were already at least two minority groups with enrollments larger than the white enrollment. Many central cities were being inherited by large and divided minority communities. A 1994 national survey of the adult population concluded that the stereotypes of various minority groups towards one another are more extreme than those of whites toward each group. For example, 68% of Asians believed that Latinos "tend to have bigger families than they are able to support" and 31% agreed that African Americans "want to live on welfare." More than two-fifths of African Americans and Latinos, on the other hand, agreed with a statement asserting that Asians were "unscrupulous, crafty and devious in business."(*New York Times*, March 3, 1994: B8). The huge 1992 riots in Los Angeles saw Latino and African American rioters looting businesses in Los Angeles' Koreatown. Minority and whites can possess group-based stereotypes of both negative and positive sorts. Unfortunately, urban political strategies often turned on efforts to divide and mobilize various minority groups. Such divisions come into the schools in many ways. One exploratory

study showed, for example, very different teacher attitudes in a California high school toward Mexican immigrants, Mexican Americans, and Japanese Americans in a central California high school. That study suggested that teachers had more positive orientations toward immigrant than American-born Latinos and an expectation that Japanese kids would automatically excel in math.(Matute-Bianchi, 1986).

At a time when many cities and parts of the country will increasingly have schools with several minority groups, including whites, and no majority, conceiving of desegregation as a multi-dimensional process and understanding how a school can be successful for several groups simultaneously in ways that shows respect for each, addresses special needs of each and cultivates good relationships among all are very challenging tasks. It is very important to develop and assess materials and methods for working in such settings. Analysis of the best ways to deal with education of non-English speaking students from several different language backgrounds in the same school or group of schools is a very important task.

Researchers working on housing segregation have suggested that multiracial neighborhoods may be more stable and less inclined to a rapid racial transition than biracial neighborhoods. It would be of great interest to analyze this issue as well in a school . If multiracial schools work better, at least under some circumstances, creating more could become an important goal.

Desegregation planning for Asian students should depend on the specific local circumstances. The clearest case comes when there is an Asian community that was subjected to a history of discrimination, is still segregated, and is receiving inferior education. Such a group should be treated like African American and Latino students and the goal should be to help these students gain access to middle class desegregated schools. The other clear case comes with a group not experiencing severe historic discrimination that is neither segregated nor educationally disadvantaged. Immigrants from India, for example, might normally be in this category. Such students should be treated much like white students in desegregation planning. Finding the best approach toward groups that combine very successful populations with highly disadvantaged recent immigrant communities--such as the Chinese communities in some cities--would raise the most complex research and policy issues. In cases such as that, the best approach might be to have a goal of attempting to

lessen the isolation of those neighborhoods where there was serious segregation by both race and poverty.

Possible Implications for Whites

If members of Asian subgroups are to be considered eligible for special treatment under desegregation orders even though the overall Asian community is not segregated or unequal and even though their particular group has not experienced a history of discrimination in the area, then it may be necessary to open up the possibility of desegregation or affirmative action rights for certain subgroups of whites. There are also a great many whites with problems of poverty and disadvantage and entire regions, such as Appalachia, with low levels of educational and economic attainment among whites. In fact, for long-term white residents of highly disadvantaged areas the argument for access to stronger schools may be stronger than for new refugees from groups not historically discriminated against in the U.S. There are also groups of white refugees from other countries who have low incomes, language problems, and sometimes experience a degree of residential concentration.

Should Desegregation be Limited to Groups that Were Historically Segregated?

The constitutional requirements for desegregation orders are strongly linked to a history of discrimination. The legal theory is that desegregation mandates are remedies for a history of illegal segregation and unequal education. Not only does there have to be showing of a history of discrimination but there also has to be evidence that that history is linked to contemporary segregation. Where that history has not been demonstrated to the satisfaction of the courts, such as in proving the way in which the suburbs contributed to central city segregation, desegregation orders have not been issued. Many of the Asian subgroups and some of the Latino subgroups experiencing severe difficulties in U.S. schools, however, come from nationalities that were not present in the U. S. in significant numbers before 1980 and were not victims of a history of official discrimination in U.S. school districts. Often times, however, all students who are called "Latino" or "Asian" or "white" are treated the same in spite of both different needs and a different history.

Among Asian communities there were very severe historical violations, particularly in the West. Discrimination was intense, for example, against Chinese and Japanese-origin people, especially in California. Japanese citizens were subjected to extreme racially motivated sanctions during World War II when many West Coast Japanese-Americans were removed to detention camps on racial grounds (citizens of German background faced no such requirements.) The problem for these groups is linking those violations to contemporary educational inequalities. Chinese and Japanese-origin students as groups are doing very well today in U.S. schools. There is no serious history of official U.S. school discrimination against Cambodian and Laotian hill tribes since there were extremely few people from those groups in the country until the 1980s. Asian groups experiencing contemporary problems and Latinos coming from Central and South America are accorded civil rights because the courts and agencies use general categories such as "Asian" or "Latino" in defining desegregation requirements. The problem is that overall requirements for very different populations within an extremely diverse Asian community make little sense.

It may be necessary, in other words, to move beyond traditional legal analysis to obtain a desegregation plan which actually provides benefits to the most disadvantaged students. Civil rights lawyers, judges, and school officials all need to work on policies designed to identify and help those students most in need. In some cases, this will involve a move beyond a race-based analysis into one that increasingly emphasizes the problems of concentrated poverty, particularly when those interact with racial discrimination and stereotypes. To the extent that the courts cannot resolve these issues successfully, increasing responsibility falls on the educational professionals. The school systems do have authority to foster forms of desegregation that may not be legally mandated but may be highly beneficial to students and to the communities.

Immigrants

It is very important in building policies to sort out those needs that may be temporary needs of new immigrants from those that are long-term necessities. New immigrants normally experience severe transitional problems, particularly when they arrive without education and money, but those have never been seen as creating group rights, with the exception of the right to bilingual education created by federal interpretation of the 1964 Civil

Rights Act. The provision of the 1964 law forbidding discrimination on the basis of "national origin" provided the legal basis for such regulation.

Intermarriage

The complexity is even greater for those Asian subgroups which experience an extremely high level of intermarriage with whites. There is a current debate about the addition of mixed race categories to the Census to capture the extensive intermarriage between some minority communities and whites and among various minority communities. (In 1992, for example, more than a fourth of married Latinos were married to a non-Latino and there were 1.2 million interracial marriages of whites, only .2 million of them to African Americans. (Saluter, 1992: xi) As we move toward an increasingly multiracial country, with many interracial families, it will become necessary to think about devising desegregation on the basis of educational and social inequalities affecting groups of students rather than on sweeping racial categories, since any assignment of an interracial child to a single race category will have an arbitrary character.

Toward a New Definition of Desegregation

In many communities with a substantial Asian population the old definitions of desegregation make little sense because they simply do not address many of the questions that must be answered in a multiracial setting. There is no simple way to transfer a policy from a polarized bi-racial setting with a history of imposed apartheid to a multiracial setting of great complexity requiring decisions about a number of groups with very little history in American society. In San Francisco, where Chinese are the largest single group, the desegregation plan rests on requirements that there be at least four of the eight recognized groups in each school and that no one ethnic group has more than about 40% of the seats in any school. This approach grew out of local experience and negotiations among the parties, not research. The evaluation of the first eight years of the plan suggests that it may have been a mistake to permit concentration of several disadvantaged groups of various racial and ethnic backgrounds in a single school. In working toward better answers it seems important to try to frame the goals of the school desegregation movement and to think about how they

may apply in a much more diverse setting.

The basic motivation of the struggle for integrated schools was to end the concentration of African American students in schools that were separate and unequal in many respects and that never offered anything close to an equal education. Social divisions were so absolute, white domination so clear, and the experience with "separate but equal" so negative, that the goal of bringing down the racial lines and ending racially separate school systems was apparent to many.

As we learned about the desegregation process it became apparent to researchers and policymakers that obtaining the potential advantages of desegregation required many changes within schools including the desegregation and retraining of faculties, the development of fair discipline, extracurricular activities, and the development of curricula that reflect and respect students cultural backgrounds and helping them overcome unequal preparation. For non-English speaking students this, obviously, includes language programs. The real benefits of desegregation, research showed, could be enhanced by methods of instruction that involved students working in groups across racial lines on some projects and by human relations training of school staff and students. Research and policy attention to such questions for Asian students has been slight.

The most common desegregation standard usually calls for student reassignments or transfers to reach approximately equal proportions of blacks and whites in each school where that is feasible. In heavily minority districts, however, courts often emphasized desegregation and magnets for only part of the minority children. "Desegregation" that would produce 80-90% minority schools in an overwhelmingly white schools was often seen as being both temporary and meaningless. The goal in heavily minority districts since the Supreme Court's 1974 Milliken decision blocking city-suburban desegregation was to obtain better school in a positive racial climate with hope that the schools would show the way toward a more equal adult society.

Transferring these desegregation and educational change objectives to the contemporary multiracial city and deciding how to treat Asian students in devising plans requires a clarification of goals in a much more complex context. The basic idea in terms of educational effects should be to provide better opportunity for ethnic groups in segregated

and unequal schools (including schools concentrating two or more different disadvantaged minorities). This should be sought both by providing access to high performing schools where the dominant enrollments are from racial and ethnic groups experiencing greater success in school and in the society and by supporting educational policies. Since the society that students will be moving into is a multiracial society which will have no majority, the goal of integrating blacks into a predominantly white society is obviously not the right goal. If the mainstream of the society is to be multiracial then so should the school be. A reasonable standard might be for each school to have substantial representation of at least three major groups in a multiracial area.

Traditional desegregation plans did not have to worry seriously about students who had no clear racial or ethnic identity. The rigidity of southern society meant that there were relatively clear racial lines and very few students who could not be easily classified. The intermarriage rate is much higher for most Latino groups and extraordinarily high for some Asian and Pacific groups. People who live in interracial families should not be forced to choose a single racial identity, a process which would become increasingly absurd over the generations. Such students should be counted as an asset for desegregation in whatever school they attend. Students from integrated families should not be forced to classify themselves within a segregated set of categories and then required to transfer schools based on that inaccurate classification.

Multiracial communities may offer greater possibilities for school integration through residential integration. Some scholars report that racial change is less rapid and less inevitable when there is a multiracial community rather than a community that seems to be in transition from one race to the other. Where neighborhoods have a stable multiracial pattern and combine both more and less successful groups in their schools, the best option should be a stably integrated multiracial neighborhood school.

If these ideas are combined into an approach for planning school integration, the steps might be as follows:

1) determine which racial groups are segregated and experiencing severe academic problems in the area
2) determine which groups are not segregated and are experiencing educational success
3) determine which neighborhoods are stably integrated with two or more major groups present. Define them as integrated and withdraw them and their students from further planning. Establish them as attendance zones for neighborhood schools. Support and do not close schools in such neighborhoods.
4) remove multiracial students from calculations of segregation, letting them remain in their local school unless they to chose to transfer.
5) develop a desegregation goal that reflects the population of the area. For example, a plan could specify that Latinos and African Americans should be in schools with between 40% and 60% combined white and Asian enrollment
5) give serious attention to schools with concentrated poverty as well as racial segregation in devising plans
6) develop sets of school and housing strategies to increase integration
7) develop a plan to achieve integration--for Asian students a strong focus on academic quality and college preparation would doubtless increase the appeal of a plan.
8) develop research and plans for dealing with the human relations dimensions of multi-racial schools
9) develop a plan for increased housing integration and stabilization of integrated neighborhoods both through better fair housing enforcement and though changes in location, site selection and tenant selection in

subsidized housing.

Under an approach of this sort, there would be Asian subgroups both among the segregated and among the integrated populations and access to the schools dominated by the more privileged Asian groups would be recognized as a clear benefit for segregated students from disadvantaged minorities. Disadvantaged Asian students would have desegregation rights similar to African Americans and Latinos. There could well be situations, for example, in which it would be very beneficial for a disadvantaged segregated Asian minority to have access to attend the schools which served substantial numbers of students from privileged Asian groups. Interracial families of partially Asian background and Asian residents of stably integrated multiracial neighborhoods would not be subjected to any mandatory desegregation policies. Research and experimentation would be implemented to learn better ways of designing and implementing multiracial desegregation. As Asian students become a steadily more important part of our schools, it is long past time to take seriously their inclusion in the promise of *Brown v. Board of Education* that public schools become a basic instrument for correcting our history of discrimination and provide fair and integrated education for all students.

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